



**Implementation of Self-Assessment of Students, Recording Facilitated by  
WhatsApp to Improve Speaking Skill**

Gabriela Elizabeth Segovia Segovia

Coordinator: María Rossana Ramírez Ávila

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## **Implementation of Self-Assessment of Students, Recording Facilitated by WhatsApp to Improve Speaking Skill**

This paper was developed to help overcome the main difficulties that students have to perform oral skills due to a lack of vocabulary and mispronunciation mistakes in a foreign language. Other problems are that students dislike to participate and interact during English lessons; or most of the time, they are quiet or use their mother tongue for asking and answering questions.

Students are uncomfortable speaking in a target language because of a lack of opportunities to interact using the learned vocabulary; they dislike memorizing phrases as well as following instructions or repeating new words. Hence, self-assessment is an alternative strategy to encourage students to assess their learning process. Indeed, the complement of the use of technological tools, such as applications that allow recording audio, will promote real interaction with others and enhance the learning experience.

Lastly, students have difficulties speaking in English because they do not have task-based activities that encourage real communication. Mispronunciation raises students' anxiety about making mistakes; for this purpose, practicing self-assessment as well as using authentic materials, recording, and sending audio through WhatsApp will improve their experience in language practice.

### **Literature Review**

This study is implemented to elevate oral skills through WhatsApp. This section contains theories and similar studies that have self-evaluation as a learning method by using WhatsApp audios.

#### **Self-Assessment Definition**

Self-assessment is the process that students carry out to execute a critical reflection, in such a way that this progress can be recorded and could thereby generate

qualifications for their learning. The term called "assessment" itself refers to the process generated by students in such a way that they critically reflect on their learning and that of their peers (Roberts, 2006). It is also stated that self-assessment is a meaningful aspect of the student who can judge himself by his achievements in a particular task; thus, helping him to describe how his work compares with the rest and hence improve (Bourke & Mentis, 2007).

Therefore, it can be said that self-assessment is a tool that allows positive self-criticism: "the participation of students in issuing value judgments about their achievements and the results of their learning in a supportive approach to student"(Wride, 2017, p. 15).

Finally, as Black and William (2006 as cited in Brown & Harris, 2014) mentioned that self-assessment is an instrument where the student continues his processes in the classroom but at the same time forms an idea of his own for skills and limitations. For all above, evaluation becomes a key part of both self-analysis and comparison with the surrounding environment.

### **Benefits and Challenges of Using Self-Assessment**

Talking about the challenges of self-assessment, there are those situations where a student does not feel able to analyze himself because he does not have a clear idea about his commitment and the content that allows him to compare what he has done by himself versus what is correct (McMillan & Hearn, 2008).

However, self-assessment according to Andrews (2016), helps the teacher to influence the student's ability to associate reality with the learning content, as this aids to increase cognitive growth as the student questions himself about the learning achieved. Likewise, Martinez (2020) states that self-evaluation considerably raised speaking competence scores in recordings.

Additionally, self-assessment contributes to the development of the appropriate attributes of the graduates in the English language, since it could develop the capacity for self-assessment, fostering learning skills permanently. In the same vein, the act of self-assessment encourages us to evaluate whether the student needs to enhance their content-related skills, as well as their punctuality. Following Wiesnerová's (2012) findings, this process can positively impact the student's holistic growth, as it empowers them to use their standards in making informed decisions. These situations depend on whether students can accurately and realistically judge their work (Brown & Harris, 2014).

Further, the school self-assessment empowers the academic community to identify the correct practices for learning, in such a way that measures are taken in areas that imply continuous improvement (Department of Education and Skills, 2016), in turn, the self-assessment of students could benefit from regulating their learning by requiring them to monitor how they work and encouraging them to change traditional or invalid forms of application (Hargraves, 2018). Nevertheless, it is affirmed that self-assessment is a fundamental metacognitive strategy because it manages to produce advances in learning (Gehring, 2017).

### **Alternative Ways to Apply Self-Assessment**

McNamara and O'Hara (2008) indicated that at the risk of oversimplifying the information in the self-assessment, it is possible to achieve categorization through external supports that are designed to facilitate data collection by schools and teachers. Which allows them to meet the requirements of self-assessment systems. Nonetheless, there is a support designed to involve teachers in the theory and practice of self-assessment, whose purpose will be the development of sustainable assessment models.

Panadero and Alonso-Tapia (2013) stated that it is essential to consider the difference between the two self-assessment approaches; the first perspective includes

self-assessment as an instructional process used by the teacher as an educational resource; therefore, when "assessing our work" the teacher is also involved since self-assessment can be seen as an instructional process centered on the teacher. Towler and Broadfoot (2006) defined, the self-assessment as a tangible approach for defining objectives and evaluating their attainment, as it necessitates active involvement and critical thinking from both students and teachers.

However, Bruce (2001, as cited in McMillan & Hean 2008) indicated that students can achieve self-assessment through their self-monitoring with deliberate attention to what they do since this also relates to external standards. Thus, the student requires self-control of the awareness of thought and progress occurs in the way that part of what the students do at the time of their self-assessment is identified.

The basis of any evaluation is that the person analyzes themselves to discover their interconnection with their identity, social, and cultural environment. Social identity theory deals with how people come to see themselves as members of a group. Self-awareness includes integrating personal and social identities and identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets (Martinez, 2020). Social and cultural forces shape people's day-to-day experiences and directly impact their self-efficacy. Cultural competence is important for clinicians to provide effective counseling skills. Social studies help individuals identify the cultural basis for celebrations and ways of viewing themselves and their societies (Bourke & Mentis, 2007).

Additionally, McNamara and O'Hara (2008) described that it is possible to help the teacher to carry out their evaluation through practice models. In addition to the benefits for students, the authors mentioned that self-assessment can also assist teachers in conducting their evaluations by utilizing practice models. These models offer a framework for teachers, to identify areas of their instruction that require improvement and to develop strategies for enhancing their teaching practices. By engaging in self-

assessment, both students and teachers can take ownership of their learning and teaching processes, leading to more effective and meaningful outcomes.

Due to this, various resources have been generated at the national and international levels to support educational and teaching institutions that require active participation in the self-assessment process.

Rolheiser and Ross (2013) identified that there are four stages in teaching self-assessment to students. Consequently, it is assumed that the students have a leading role and will use this tool to judge their performance so that the same student is the one who gives the evaluation criteria based on the teacher-student negotiation.

Likewise, the authors stated that students are taught to generate criteria for their work from the integration of personal and school objectives. In effect, students should be provided feedback on their self-assessments, in such a way that a more profound understanding of the formative assessment criteria is achieved. In addition, students must be helped to develop productive strategies and specific action plans, considering the difficulty of teaching students to evaluate their work, in such a way that instrument designs are required.

Currently, students learn while experimenting with discoveries produced by experimentation. Hence, by self-assessing, they are also identifying their abilities to understand who they are within the environment that surrounds them. So, Bueno (2021) defined self-assessment (SA) as “a tool that has the power to develop students’ metacognition about what they are learning”( p. 3).

Consequently, self-assessment and speech in terms of aspects such as pronunciation, continuous conversations, and other elements of speech help to generate a process between the student's perception. Finally, Bueno (2021) in her study she declared that self-assessment could improve speech because, according to this document, It was able to confirm that the self-assessment rubric's definition helped

students comprehend the goal of a self-assessment and arrive at the intended outcome, which was learning.

### **Innovation**

The innovation was applied to 6 volunteers whose English level was A1. The lesson plan was focused on practicing short dialogues about daily life events.

In the beginning, students received an explanation about how to use a checklist to self-assess; also, they did a short practice to familiarize themselves with the assessment process. Moreover, during the first week, students in pairs used a mentor text provided by the teacher to identify new words and vocabulary related to the topic to create a short and basic dialogue about how they celebrate a holiday. Thereafter, they received feedback to identify what they had to improve. The following week, students practiced Wh-questions and they recorded audio answering questions then they assessed their performance using the checklist provided by the teachers.

From there on, students identified new vocabulary to discuss different holidays; also, during the third week, students practiced vocabulary learning by using games or dynamics. Hence, students created a short dialogue about holidays, practiced pronunciation, and assessed their performance using the checklist. Subsequently, the post-test application was carried out.

In other words, the participants created their dialogues based on a sample provided by the teacher, and they recorded audio in pairs and self-evaluated their performance using a checklist (See Appendix 1). Finally, they sent their audio to the teacher by using What's App. A rubric for speaking was used to assess the activity (See Appendix 2). The implementation took place around 4 weeks. Moreover, classes of 40 minutes twice per week were developed using different activities from the innovation planning (See Appendix 3). As well, they had got feedback through WhatsApp.

### Research Methodology

This study was based on an action research study where the analysis of data was developed to identify a problem that limits the interaction of students during the speaking tasks in the classroom. Thus, "action research is empowering because participants researchers can effect change and make improvements." (Valcarcel, 2009, p. 5)

Variable	Conceptual definition	Operational definition
<b>Independent:</b> Self-assessment	Self-assessment is the process that students carry out to execute a critical reflection, in such a way that this progress can be recorded and could thereby generate qualifications for their learning.	A self-assessment checklist containing 5 items on which students can respond on a 3-point scale.
<b>Dependent:</b> Speaking	Speaking is the act or skill of giving a speech at a public event.	Summative assessment by Teacher. Based on GRASPS standards: Vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation, interaction, and Content of the audio.

First, primary data collection was used quantitatively. For this purpose, both at the time of the pre-test and the post-test, a questionnaire with four questions that would result in an objective evaluation of their oral performance was used. Thus, these data as such were qualitative in nature as they yielded numerical scores of the previous levels in oral management skills, and later, in a second moment, in the post-test. Hence, data and scores were collected from six participants whose parents gave their consent to participate in this study.

In this sense, although the evaluation applied represented a quantitative score, indicating an objective trend of the level of the students, the evaluation itself, the



approach to the analysis of these was not simply to quantify the data but also to consider them qualitatively.

For this reason, once the results of the pre-test were analyzed, the teacher presented a self-evaluation instrument, explaining to the students its characteristics and advantages, to complement the results of the pretest. Later, students started to record voice notes using WhatsApp as means of interaction. An explanation of how to use the self-assessment instrument was given to students. Students then completed a self-assessment checklist between the pretest and posttest.

### **Participants**

This innovation was applied to 6 students who were a group of volunteers, belonging to the ninth grade at a public school in Latacunga, Ecuador. Their age ranges between 13 and 14 years old. Their native language is Spanish. According to the Council of Europe (2020), they are at the A1 level. The students had difficulty doing oral assignments. They are also unable to pronounce words clearly and articulate their thoughts. It was brought on by a lack of vocabulary and conversation as well. The kids consequently felt uncomfortable and bored while engaging in the speaking exercise. Because of this, exercises were conducted to enhance oral abilities using What's App to record a conversation and practice pronunciation.

### **Instruments**

#### **Pretest and Posttest**

To provide an answer to the research question: "Does the application of self-assessment of students' dialogue recording via WhatsApp have any effect on the improvement of oral proficiency performance in 9th graders of a public school?".

A pre-test and post-test were used. As a result, the pre-test provides information about the current level of students speaking about daily life events, whereas the post-test shows information about the improvement of students in their oral skills performance.

In addition, the instructor-graded rubric measured students' speaking skills; the instrument had four subscales: vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation, interaction, and audio content. Each was measured on a scale of 1.5 to 2.5, with 1.5 being the lowest score and 2.5 being the highest. The sum of the four subscales was used to calculate the total score for the self-assessment checklist. The instructor-rated rubric was used twice, once at the pretest and once at the posttest after the 4-week intervention period. And with this logic, it was intended to be able to answer the group of students evaluated on whether the implementation of student self-assessment, recording dialogues via WhatsApp, will improve the performance of students' oral skills.

#### **Self-Assessment Checklist.**

The students' self-assessment checklist was developed in Spanish and divided into three parameters: Yes, Sometimes, and Not yet. It has five descriptors: 1) I use the simple present to converse with a partner about a celebration or holiday; 2) I use appropriate vocabulary to express my feelings and emotions when I talk about a celebration or holiday; 3) I use appropriate vocabulary to talk about celebrations holidays; 4) My pronunciation is mostly intelligible; 5) I can interact by asking and answering questions.

#### **Data Analysis**

A paired-sample t-test was used to compare the instructor-graded rubric between the pretest and posttest. The null hypothesis for this test is that there is no difference between the matched pairs. The analysis was completed in Microsoft Excel using the Analytics Tool Kit. As a result, six results were tested. Then this data give a response to

the first research question related to the use of self-assessment and audio recordings to strengthen speaking skills.

### **Ethical Considerations**

According to Brandenburg and McDonough (2019), some ethical considerations were well thought out, so, ethical practices involve responsibility and professional obligations that permit to follow guidelines to maintain ethical research conduct such as gaining informed consent and considering ethical words for justifying moral decisions. A good researcher frequently needs to "update" and prepared himself. That is why, “researchers also must be culturally competent to conduct the research. If the study is complex, a team of researchers with various expertise and competence may be necessary.” (Connelly, 2014, p. 54).

Based on these principles, the present study respected and considered all aspects involved in the ethical aspect of the participants. This is even more so considering that this was a group of minors; therefore, no evaluation was carried out without prior authorization from their guardians or representatives.

## **Results**

### **Pretest oral Skills Rubric Scores**

Student pretest scores on the rubric resulted in their average as follows:

**Table 1**

*Pretest Rubric Scores.*

<b>PRETEST</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>
<b>VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR</b>	1.6	1.5	1.5
<b>PRONUNCIATION</b>	1.58	1.5	1.5
<b>INTERACTION</b>	1.6	1.5	1.5
<b>CONTENT</b>	2.3	2.5	2.5

**Posttest Oral Skills Rubric Scores**

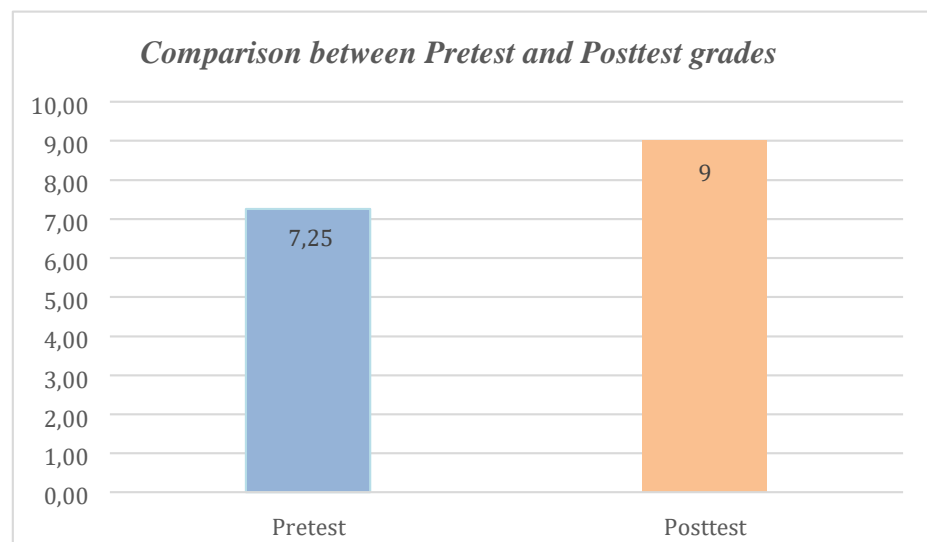
**Table 2***Posttest Rubric Scores.*

<b>PRETEST</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>MODE</b>
<b>VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR</b>	2.08	2	2
<b>PRONUNCIATION</b>	2.33	2.5	2.5
<b>INTERACTION</b>	2.08	2	2
<b>CONTENT</b>	2.5	2.5	2.5

**Statistical Comparison of Pretest and Posttest**

A paired-sample test was used to explore the research question, “Does the implementation of self-assessment of students recording dialogues using WhatsApp improve the students’ speaking skills’ performance among 9th-grade students in a public school? In a paired-sample t-test, the null hypothesis is that there is no difference between dependent groups. The alternative hypothesis is that there is a difference between dependent groups.

The paired-sample t-test identified a statistically significant difference between pretest and post-test scores ( $t = -10.24$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The test indicated support for the alternative hypothesis.

**Figure 3***Comparison of mean pretest and posttest oral skill grades.*

To validate the intervention phase, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to measure the statistical relationship between two variables based on the method of covariance. It is shown that the coefficient value lies between  $\pm 0.50$  and  $\pm 1$ ; therefore, a high degree of correlation was obtained, which indicates a strong correlation between self-assessment and the improvement of speaking skills.

**Table 3**

*Statistical comparison of pretest and posttest.*

	<b>VARIABLE 1</b>	<b>VARIABLE 2</b>
<b>MEAN</b>	0.725	0.82222
<b>VARIANCE</b>	0.075	0.2
<b>OBSERVATIONS</b>	6	6
<b>PEARSON CORRELATION</b>	0.40824829	
<b>DF</b>	5	
<b>t Stat</b>	- 10.24695077	
<b>P(T&lt;=t) one-tail</b>	7.60284E-05	
<b>t Critical one-tail</b>	2.015048373	
<b>P(T&lt;=t) two-tail</b>	0.000152057	

### **Discussion**

According to the authors identified in the literature review compared to the findings evidenced in this study, it was possible to recognize that students' self-assessment is a process that helps them to improve their judgment and analysis of themselves, which coincided with what was said by Panadero and Alonso-Tapia (2013), who affirmed that there is a high percentage of primary, secondary, and university teachers who recognize the use of self-assessment as an instructional process.

In addition, it was identified by Andrews (2016) that when the student performs an instructional process when self-assessing, it was verified in the research that students agreed that they should be part of a formative assessment along with other types of assessment such as peer review.

Furthermore, Panadero and Alonso-Tapia (2013) reiterated that self-assessment is a crucial skill that supports student learning and should be continuously promoted both professionally and personally. By developing the ability to self-assess their learning, students can acquire an objective criterion and enhance their proficiency in various subjects, including the study of a second language such as Spanish or English. The study found that students agree that self-assessment should be a permanent tool for their language learning process. Moreover, there are authors such as Andrews (2016) who detailed those beliefs about resources such as implementation time, good self-assessment models, as well as concern about the ability of students to self-assess, they are related to the non-use of the self-assessment, and this is confirmed by the motivation of the students towards their criteria about their progress.

Additionally, Gehringer (2017) identified that among the academic benefits of self-assessment is precisely the efficient and effective way of monitoring the progress of students based on regular intervals of time and knowledge. Of course, in the case of this document, continuous and even weekly monitoring of the teacher on the self-assessment process is recommended.

According to Wiesnerová (2012), the evaluation process has a direct impact on the student's self-understanding. In the current study, it was observed that students have developed an awareness of the purpose behind their evaluations and the ways to achieve better results.

Thus, the teacher can support the student in the development of skills that are requested; for example, in the case of speaking, as mentioned by Bueno (2021), it is also possible to encourage the student to develop other skills that they have needed, either as a result of their motivation or concern about it.

On the other hand, Brown and Harris (2014) evidenced that the evaluation practice contributes to making decisions that must be verified and reliable since it was

identified in this document that for self-analysis the student first requires full knowledge of the content of learning, and then you can proceed to the process of analysis and self-assessment based on what is evidenced in the theories and the previously learned didactics.

Finally, according to the Department of Education and Skills (2016), the process is iterative, because it is based on repetition cycles of analysis. Always loops back to the previous stage of the loop as needed. And this is how the self-assessment process is based on the construction of the teacher's experience over time and the subsequent evidence of learning in their students. In such a way that the analysis, interpretation, and action, because of the process, are possible in the educational process and of course, this is established at the time of the self-assessment.

Consequently, in this document, it was confirmed that the lens of self-assessment for learning is described according to the identity of interconnected levels. Therefore, it is important to consider the importance of basing self-assessment on a sociocultural context, identity, and level of the students. For example, it does not make sense to promote this type of dynamics in a rural context where students do not have access to the internet or a mobile phone. So, these kinds of tools have to be useful in relation to the adaptation to the necessities as the student is informed at each level by the teacher the source of the feedback regarding the information can be traced back to both parties.

### **Conclusions**

This study demonstrated how effective self-assessment was for the students to expand their oral skills. Afterward, the researcher applied the post-test to the 6 students to verify the effectiveness of self-assessment using WhatsApp. According to the results, a notorious improvement was evident since the mean grade of the post-test was 9 and the score obtained in the pre-test 7.25.

The results of the paired-sample t-test showed that self-evaluation considerably raised speaking competence scores in recordings made using WhatsApp. This is consistent with self-assessment ideas. Checklists with integrated teacher comments could be the main self-assessment tool since providing justifications for the verification (e.g., accurate vs. incorrect) is seen to be advantageous for students learning (McNamara & O'Hara, 2008).

The main aim of the assessment is to determine the learners' current situation in the learning process in diagnostic and achievement tests. Subsequently, teachers need to determine criteria to be socialized and understood by learners; later, students have to focus their attention on their partners' achievements and the inadequacies others notice far beyond marking, getting results in terms of not just qualitative but quantitative data. Consequently, along the self-assess process, students will be able to understand how well or badly they speak by assessing their performance.

Self-assessment and rubric scores for the pretest and posttest did not significantly correlate. Between the pretest and the posttest, personal study may have had an impact on their perception of themselves. Students' self-evaluations would diverge from the results of the pretest and posttest as they studied and improved their pronunciation.

### **Limitations**

The current study could have been strengthened if teachers had used ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) as well as different applications to record audio for practicing pronunciation to facilitate real interaction during classes. On the other hand, the use of technological resources is limited in this public institution and the lack of motivation to use new apps does not permit students to engage in these types of activities. As a result, it is not possible to work with a whole group of students.



On the other hand, most of the students are not familiar with ICT; for this reason, they had trouble using applications for recording audio at the beginning of the process. Most of them did not have WhatsApp so shy students did not have the opportunity to clarify their doubts during the classes because of the time. Therefore, they required extra time out of their school schedule to get instructions for using ICT.

Furthermore, prior knowledge about how to perform a self-assessment would facilitate the improvement of the oral skill process. The research intended to apply self-assessment of students recording audio using WhatsApp to improve oral skills with a small group of students who, beyond their level of use and adaptation to this type of technology, should be encouraged to use them in a pedagogical sense.

### **Recommendations**

In the future, it would be helpful to survey or interview students about their self-assess process and perceptions. Teachers should create assignments for students to motivate them to use new applications for practicing pronunciation and interacting with others using real situations.

Results showed there was no significant correlation between self-assessment scores and pronunciation grades from the pretest and post-test rubrics. It might be possible to have a deeper knowledge of how self-assessment is assisting students in improving their pronunciation by surveying or interviewing them. Understanding how students are studying in the intervals between the pretest, self-assessment, and post-test would also be helpful to the researcher.

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**Appendix 1**

**Checklist**

Available upon request.

**Appendix 2**

**Speaking Rubric**

Available upon request.

**Appendix 3**

**Lesson Plan**

Available upon request.